

REMARKS

I. Status Summary

With this Amendment, claims 1-8 and 10-16 are currently pending. Claims 1, 11 and 14-16 are amended herein. Claim 9 has been canceled.

Claims 9 had been indicated as allowable if rewritten into independent format including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The features of claim 9 have now been included in amended claims 1 and 16 which should now be allowable.

II. Claim of Priority

The September 7, 2006 Office Action indicated the acknowledgment of the Applicants' Claim of Priority based on 35 U.S.C. § 19(a)-(d) and that all certified copies of the priority document had been received at the USPTO as of September 7, 2006. On January 4, 2007, Examiner DSouza contacted counsel for the Applicants. Examiner DSouza stated that he did not see a certified copy of the priority document in the file and that the designation that all copies of the priority document had been received was made in error.

Applicants respectfully submit that on January 31, 2007, Applicants submitted a certified copy of the priority document, DE 101 02 928.4. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the requirements to claim priority in the above-referenced foreign application have been met and that the claim of priority should be perfected.

III. Specification

Within the September 7, 2006 Office Action, the abstract and a paragraph on page 1 of the application were objected to for containing certain informalities. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to the designated paragraph and the abstract outlined above address these informalities. Concerning the

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suggested layout of the specification, Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner's attention to the Preliminary Amendment filed with the present application on July 8, 2003. Within that Amendment, Applicants inserted within the specification appropriate section headings. Therefore, with the amendments made above as well as in the Preliminary Amendment filed with the application on July 8, 2003, Applicants respectfully submit that the objections to the specification should be withdrawn.

IV. Claim Objections

Claims 11, 14, and 15 were objected to because of the informality of not having the term "trellis" capitalized in claims. Applicants respectfully submit that appropriate amendments have been made to claims 11, 14, and 15 to address this informality and the claim objections should be withdrawn.

V. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-7, 10-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsui et al. (Low Power ACS Unit Design for the Viterbi Decoder: May 30, 1999 IEEE International Symposium on Circuits and Systems, page 137-140.) (hereinafter, "Tsui") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,341,387 to Nguyen et al. (hereinafter, "Nguyen") and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,371,471 to Chennakeshu et al. (hereinafter, "Chennakeshu"). Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsui in view of Nguyen and further in view of Chennakeshu and U.S. Patent No. 4,879,7292 to Salembier et al. (hereinafter, "Salembier").

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 16 have been amended to include the features of claim 9 which have been indicated as allowable. Thus, since claim 9 and its features including the features of claim 1 have been indicated as allowable, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is also allowable over Tsui, Nguyen, Chennakeshu and Salembier, alone or in combination. Concerning claim 16, this claim is a method claim. However, amended claim 16

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includes the features of claim 9 which are not disclosed, taught, or suggested in Tsui, Nguyen, Chennakeshu and Salembier, alone or in combination. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that both claims 1 and 16 are allowable over the cited prior art.

Since claims 2-8 and 10-15 depend from claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are also allowable.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of claims 1-8 and 10-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn and the claims allowed at this time.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in proper condition for allowance, and an early notice to such effect is earnestly solicited.

If any small matter should remain outstanding after the Patent Examiner has had an opportunity to review the above Remarks, the Patent Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned patent attorney in order to resolve these matters and avoid the issuance of another Official Action.

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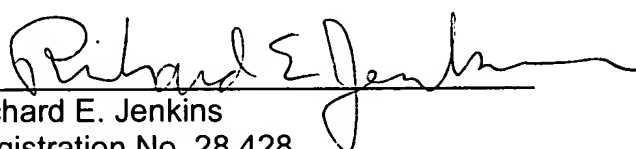
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with the filing of this correspondence to Deposit Account No. 50-0426.

Respectfully submitted,

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